

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6158

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 02141

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: FR, CB, US

SUBJECT: FRENCH CONTACT WITH FUNK REP IN PARIS

1. QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ASIA BOLLE TOLD EMBOFF JANUARY 23 THAT FUNK REPRESENTATIVE OK SAKUN HAD CALLED ON HIM JANUARY 21. BOLLE ASKED HIM WHY GRUNK HAD BEEN SO SLOW TO IMPLEMENT BY DECREE A SIHANOUK DECISION ANNOUNCED IN OCTOBER 1973 TRANSFERRING ALL MINISTERIAL POSTS (EXCEPT FOREIGN AFFAIRS) TO IN-COUNTRY FIGURES. OK SAKUN EXPLAINED LAMELY THAT THE DELAY WAS CAUSED BY THE "MATERIAL PROBLEMS", THE SLOWNESS OF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN PEKING AND THE GOVERNMENT IN-COUNTRY. OK SAKUN SAID THAT THOSE WHO HAD TAKEN OVER THE PORTFOLIOS WERE ALL WELL KNOWN MEN, MANY OF WHOM HAD STUDIED IN PARIS. OK SAKUN CONFIRMED THAT SARIN CHAK REMAINED MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BUT HE WAS NOW SECONDED BY A DEPUTY MINISTER IN-COUNTRY. CHAU SENG LOST HIS POSITION AS MINISTER FOR SPECIAL MISSIONS; HE IS NOW A SPECIAL ENVOY FOR EUROPE. HE WILL BE BASED OUT OF PARIS, BUT COVER MISSIONS TO A NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES. OK SAKUN SAID THAT THE CABINET CHANGES DO NOT MEAN ANY CHANGE IN THE GRUNK LINE.

2. BOLLE ASKED ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VISIT TO
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CAMBODIA OF HUYNH THAN PHAT, PRG PRESIDENT. OK SAKUN

SAID THAT IT WAS MERELY TO RETURN KHIEU SAMPHAN'S VISIT TO THE PRG AREAS OF SOUTH VIETNAM. IT UNDERLINED THE "GOOD NEIGHBOR" RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GRUNK AND PRG, THE SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE OF BOTH MOVEMENTS, AND THEIR EQUAL STATUS.

3. WHEN ASKED FOR THE GRUNK APPRAISAL OF THE SITUATION IN PHNOM PENH, OK SAKUN SAID THAT THE SITUATION WAS MORE FAVORABLE TO THE GRUNK THAN IT HAS BEEN IN PAST YEARS. HE REFRAINED, HOWEVER, FROM ANY OPTIMISTIC PREDICTION OF EARLY VICTORY. OK SAKUN NOW TALKED NOT IN TERMS OF A MILITARY VICTORY AND CAPTURE OF PHNOM PENH, BUT IN TERMS OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE GKR THROUGH THE DEMORALIZATION OF THE POPULATION CAUSED BY THE "ASPHYXIATION" OF THE CITY. BOLLE COMMENTED THAT THIS POSITION REPRESENTED A CLARIFICATION OF, IF NOT A CHANGE IN, THE GRUNK PROPAGANDA ABOUT THE GOAL OF THEIR MILITARY ATTACKS. BOLLE THOUGHT THAT THIS GRUNK POSITION COULD BE TRACED TO THE CHINESE REVOLUTION EXPERIENCE AND DRV VIEWS ABOUT 1965 (SIC) ABOUT NOT ATTACKING CITIES DIRECTLY, BUT WAITING FOR THEM "TO FALL LIKE RIPE FRUIT."
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